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MILTON'S SONNET ON THE MASSACRE IN PIEDMONT

By KESTER SVENDSEN

VERY little public attention has been paid to the inner workings of the verse or the language and imagery in Milton's sonnets.[1] Exigencies of space and taste have persuaded editors and critics to deal mostly with the problem of general sonnet structure and Milton's supposed deviation from the Italian model. The profit with which one may examine the rhetorical and metrical effects in these brief poems will perhaps appear from an exploration of the sonnet on the massacre in Piedmont, commonly regarded as "the most elevated and passionate of all, as it is the finest composition in verse."[2] Conscious artistry such as we have come to identify with Milton should be and is, eventually, accessible to analysis.

The formal shape of the poem requires a word, for it is one of the group generally accepted as superior to those which follow the so-called classical Italian structure. Pattison was inclined to see in the supposed variations the stroke of a rebellious and original Milton;[3] thus the achievement of the sonnet might be thought to derive in part from its break with tradition. Quite aside from the fact that Milton had precedent enough in the sonnets of Della Casa[4] to dispense with the identification of rhetorical and metrical pause at the end of the eighth line, the success of the sonnet can be shown, I think, to arise from a totality of several other factors.

Before considering these, however, it is well to note a remark of Pattison's about the language of the sonnet, for he thought the poem succeeded in spite of the "hackneyed biblical phrases of which it is composed."[5] It would be nearer the truth to argue that the sonnet succeeds because of them, for they create a tone of religious indignation quite in keeping with the dramatic intensity of the prayer and the Old Testament flavor of the opening lines. The context of allusion in words which refer to God as the shepherd, to

the murderers as Babylonian, and then to God as the sower in the parable, can only serve to heighten the religious feeling. These passages are not received as cliché so much as they are felt to be part of the common understanding of men in a century when biblical language appealed strongly to the imagination. Every word except five occurs in some form in the Bible,[6] and the parallelism in sentence structure increases the scriptural effect. The deliberate simplicity of the language appears further from the fact that, except for two proper names, all the words are native English, most of them Anglo-Saxon in origin;[7] and finally, most of the words are monosyllables.[8]

I

To begin with, the statement of the sonnet falls into three logical, if not traditional parts. The first part invokes the vengeance of God upon the murderous Piedmontese; the third asks that He sow the blood and ashes of the martyrs over Italy, so that others may understand the nature of violence and fly from the church of Rome and its impending destruction to the true religion. The second part consists of the lines

> Their moans
> The Vales redoubl'd to the Hills, and they
> To Heav'n.

These lines effect a special kind of transition. In the first part of the pome, the scene is on the earth at present time—the bones lie scattered on the cold mountains. The lines of the second part make a transition from earth where the massacre occurs to Heaven where it will be judged. In the third part, the real scene is in Heaven, to which the moans have been redoubled, and the earth is presented not merely as it is now, but as Milton hopes it will be in future time. The additional function of these transitional lines in supporting a change in tone will be noted later.

Since the quality of passionate and elevated tone has seemed the most striking characteristic of the sonnet, it may be well to inquire how that tone is set and sustained by the words and images. The fundamental method is contrast and

paradox. The innocence of the martyred Waldensians is set against the brutality of the bloody Piedmontese. The exact and immutable justice of the Protestant God in Heaven is confidently opposed to the temporary power of the Babylonian and therefore uncertain Papacy on earth. Most significantly, there is contrast even in the ideas of Deity. The God of the first part of the poem is a God of vengeance, an Old Testament Jehovah, invoked by a true believer for a terrible retribution upon the oppressors of the chosen people. But the God of the third part is the New Testament God, a Christian God of non-violence and comfort. The third part particularizes the opening word "Avenge" in such a way that God's greatest gift (the object of Milton's prayer, the vengeance) is not extracting an eye for an eye or a life for a life, but providing man with a view of evil in its true effects. Thus the "way" that the "hunder'd-fold" will learn is that of a Christian God who brings good out of evil.

The whole system of contrasts is pointed up by the paradox of the first line: "slaughter'd Saints." *Slaughter* connotes brutality and wilful, vicious killing; it is the last quality or state of mind that would be associated with the unworldly, peaceful nature of a saint. And saints are the last people one would expect to be treated like cattle. From this point of view, it is almost as difficult to conceive of saints being slaughtered as it is to conceive of them slaughtering. It is from this unexpected juxtaposition (enforced by alliteration) of brutality and innocence that the feelings of horror and passionate indignation arise, to be sustained and extended by the development of the poem. Thus the overtones of defenselessness and innocence connoted by the familiar image of the sheepfold and by words like *pure* and *mother with infant* acquire a fresh intensity from the contrasting connotations of the word *slaughter'd* and the epithet *bloody Piedmontese. Bloody* itself means bloody-minded or blood-thirsty. But in context with words like *slaughter'd* and *sheep, bloody* means bloody-handed, or smeared with blood of slaughter.

The dramatic force of the situation is achieved in part

by the metonymy in the image: "bones/ Lie scatter'd on the Alpine mountains cold." The massacre seems all the more terrible when we think of the naked and unprotected bones dispersed over the cold Alps, not heaped together (which might suggest a kind of warmth from huddling), but with long reaches and distances of snow and ice between. The suggestion of broken and scattered fragments of a whole people intensifies the sense of desolation, but simultaneously it implies an even greater power in the God who can bring good out of this desperate evil. And this intensity is supported by the note of self-criticism struck in the line "When all our Fathers worship't Stocks and Stones." Milton was thinking of the images of wood and stone to be found in the English cathedrals long after the Waldensian sect had arisen and still characteristic of the Babylonian (image-worshiping) Piedmontese. Contemptuously comparing those ornate and ceremonious effigies to savage stone and stick worship effects a bitter contrast between the forces in conflict and seems to impute some of the guilt to the late-changing English.

The idea of divine justice invoked by the image "in thy book record their groanes" marks the progression toward the later concept of God's vengeance. God will record[9] the injuries partly to hold the Piedmontese to an exact accounting, and partly to comfort or reward those who have suffered for the faith. It is as if upon the engrossing of the groans of the victims in God's book, His strict justice will inevitably occur. The immediately succeeding figure of the true believers as sheep and in their ancient fold evokes the concept of God as a shepherd or pastor concerned more for the welfare of his flock than for the punishment of wolves.[10]

Except for one after-image of horror, the crimes of the Piedmontese reach a final climax in the lines "That roll'd/ Mother with Infant down the Rocks." Even the place itself becomes an enemy as we move with the poem from the icy Alpine mountains to the quiet sheepfold, suddenly a place of slaughter, and then to the rocks down which mother and child are thrown. The overtone in *roll'd* is unmistakable; it epitomizes the brutal indifference of the Piedmontese,

who might be said to *hurl* a warrior but who with macabre humor callously *roll* a mother and child to death. The after-image mentioned above comes out in the word *ashes,* which expresses a horror not stated before, that some of the Waldensians were burned. The word suggests further, and ironically, the sort of harvest the Piedmontese may expect to reap from this sowing.[11] It suggests, finally, that the vengeance of the Lord is not of this world and thus violent, but a mystical and miraculous compensation.[12] Only in the sense of acting upon their recognition of the true effects of evil can the "hunder'd-fold" be said to grow from blood and ashes. The image is unified by the reference to the Italian *fields,* the proper place for sowing and growing.

The triumphant close to the poem arises not merely from the conviction that God need only make known the massacre for hundreds to fly to the true religion, but also from the grim emphasis upon the temporary nature of the tyrant's power. If the biblical context of *Babylonian* always brings to mind idolatry, pagan luxury, irreligion, and abuse of power, it also promises inevitable decay and destruction. Thus the significance of the term is proleptic and prophetic. And the two-edged implication of *sway* is apparent: the triple tyrant sways, or rules, over the Italian fields; but a ruler who sways upon his throne is an unsure ruler, a tottering king. The slaughter of the Waldensians, in final effect, thus sows the destruction of the tyrant's power. The phrase "fly the Babylonian wo" is, characteristically enough, a warning as well as a prophecy.

II

It now remains to see what part the technical factors have in producing the texture or quality of passionate indignation and power defined by the words and images. It is clear that the second, or transitional, part is structurally the most important in the poem, since by its careful distinction of place and time it supports the idea of a higher justice and helps prevent the impression that righteous wrath has declined into mere resignation. Alliteration, assonance, the skilful adjustment of harsh and liquid sounds, as well as

the variation in metrical structure, are organically a part of the final tension produced by the poem.

Something has already been said of the linking effect of the alliteration in *slaughter's Saints.* The contemptuous tone of *Stocks* and *Stones* and the suggestion of almost limitless power and wickedness in *Triple Tyrant* are similarly strengthened by the repetition of initial consonants. The whole clause "where STill doth Sway / The Triple TyranT" achieves a special unity and texture of its own from the alliteration of *s* and *t* and the assonance of *i.* In addition, the alliteration here and elsewhere contributes to a feeling of pattern and control, an impression further enriched by the alliteration of the rime words *GRoanes-GRow, Sow-Sway, Way-Wo.* The most apparent result of the assonance of words like *cOld, Old, FOld, ROll'd, sOw, GrOw,* and *wO* with *bOnes, stOnes, GrOances,* and *mOans* is to give the rimes an evenness of texture which, with the other vowel sounds in the poem, increases the fluid effect of the structure and the sense of organic unity in the poem.

A further effect of the rime words appears from this situation. If, as some find them, *groanes* and *moans* are onomatopoeic or echoic words, in that their sounds suggest the ideas they convey, words like *bones* and *stones,* which are by no stretch echoic themselves, become tinged with the flavor of their rime-words and tend to repeat and confirm the effect of the words *groanes* and *moans.* Simultaneously with this impression of fluidity, the limited number of rimes (there are only four), like the basic metrical pattern itself, emphasizes the necessary, contrasting sense of restraint, and control. Except for the slight pause at the end of line two, there are no end—stopped lines; the stops occur at different points within the lines. This fact, the flexible caesura, and the run-on lines increase the sense of sustained movement and the feeling that the poet is in perfect control of his form. If it is too much to allow that Milton's constriction of his thought into four rimes compensates for the freedom observed elsewhere to produce a tension or balance of its own, certainly the effect of culmination produced by the form accommodates perfectly the deepening quality of the

thought, which rises from blood and slaughter to a height of Christian forbearance and achievement.

The metrical variations within the lines are intentional and the function of them is clearly to strengthen the meaning of the lines. The most striking of these is the substitution and division in line five. The preceding line, "When all our Fathers worship't Stocks and Stones," exhibits a deliberately contrasting conventional regularity. But since the rhetorical arrangement of the first sentence emphasizes the periodic word *not,* the shift of accent is natural and necessary: "Forget not: in thy book record their groanes." The rhetoric plus the shifted accent creates the sweep of the line to a kind of emotional peak; and the words *Forget not* close off one section of the thought.

A comparable shift in pattern occurs in other lines where the first word is rhetorically emphatic:

/ x / x / x / x /
Ev'n them who kept thy truth so pure of old.

* * *

/ x x / x / x /
Slain by the bloody Piedmontese, that roll'd

* * *

/ x x / x / x / x /
Mother with Infant down the Rocks. Their moans

* * *

/ x x / x / x / x /
Early may fly the Babylonian wo.

The word *ev'n* stresses the enormity of the crime, just as the substituted trochees *slain by* and *mother* help to signalize the sudden horror and the pathos. These metrical variations are not merely in accord with the effect of sweeping indignation created by the words; taken with the sense of the words, they themselves in part produce the power and

movement in Milton's indignation at the slaughter of the Waldensians.

The selection of language assumes further meaning in view of the "technique of dissonance" employed in the poem. The preponderance of harsh, sibilant, nasal, and guttural sounds occurs in the first part of the sonnet in words like *avenge, scatter'd, cold, stocks, stones,* and *rocks.* In the latter part, the liquid sounds of *l* and *r* predominate, as in *redoubl'd, hills, all, hunder'd-fold, early.* These sounds are played off against one another in such single words as *scatter'd, record,* and *slain,* and continued in words and phrases throughout the poem. The shift in prominence from sounds which in context with the words give strength and fiber to sounds which lend ease and grace is part of the change in tone and part of the system of contrasts noted earlier. The lines are linked internally by parallelism in sentence structure and by the repetition not only of words (such as *their* and *thy*), but also of patterns of sound, such as the assonance of *o* and *a* and the repetition of the *th* sound, which occurs once in every line and in six of the lines twice or thrice.

III

Thus the technical elements of the poem, alliteration, assonance, metrical variation, cacophony, and euphony support and signalize the statement of the lines and the force of the images, and are organically responsible for the movement of the poem, for the impression of passion and fluid power in the sweep of the lines held in exquisite control. This consummately conscious artistry enables both poet and reader to preserve aesthetic distance. Perception of these effects enriches the poem for the reader; the precise adjustment of sound and sense, of pattern and variation, lends conviction and sincerity to the thought and persuades us that the poet does control the experience and does communicate it to the reader. Milton, though powerfully moved by the massacre to a powerful language of righteous anger and religious indignation, is not beside himself; he is beside the reader. None of this is surprising upon our realization that

the Milton of this late-written sonnet was about to engage, if not already engaged upon the most consciously wrought piece of great art in the English language.

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[1]The field of Milton's language is generally unexplored. George P. Marsh's *Lectures on the English Language* (New York, 1861) is the most comprehensive work available, despite its age. Some idea of the possibilities in this direction may be gained from George C. Taylor's "Milton's English," *N & Q*, CLXXVIII (1940), 56-57, which shows that conventional assumptions about Milton's language in *Lycidas* must be abandoned. R. M. Lumiansky, "Milton's English Again," *MLN*, LV (1940), 591-594, supports Taylor's conclusions by an analysis of the language of *L'Allegro*.

[2]John S. Smart, ed., *The Sonnets of John Milton* (Glasgow, 1921), p. 99. Frank A. Patterson, ed., *The Student's Milton* (New York, 1939), p. 54, calls it "perhaps the greatest in English literature" and urges careful study of the sounds and sentence structure. Harris Fletcher, ed., *The Complete Poetical Works of John Milton* (New Cambridge ed. Cambridge, Mass., 1941), p. 133, describes it as "easily the most powerful sonnet ever written."

[3]Mark Pattison, ed., *The Sonnets of John Milton* (New York, 1883), pp. 46-52. Pattison argues Milton's sense of fitness rather than deference to authority as the reason for his recurrence to the Italian form at all.

[4]Milton owned and imitated the sonnets of Della Casa. See Smart, *op, cit.*, pp. 30-35; James H. Hanford, *A Milton Handbook* (rev. ed. New York, 1939), p. 172; *The Works of John Milton* (Columbia ed. New York, 1938), XVIII, 345, 573.

[5] *Op. cit.*, pp. 58-60. Alden Sampson, *Studies in Milton* (New York, 1913), p. 112, repeats this judgment with approval.

[6]See Strong's *Concordance*. *Doubled* (Genesis 41:32, etc.) and *slaughter* (Genesis 14:17, etc.) occur, where *redoubled* and *slaughtered* do not. Two of these five not found in any form in the Bible are proper names: *Alpine, Piedmontese, sway, triple, tyrant*.

[7]The term *native* is used here in the sense proposed by Taylor in his study of *Lycidas* (and adopted by Lumiansky for *L'Allegro*), as descriptive of words in the language in some form prior to 1500. Allowing for the numerous pronouns and prepositions in the sonnet, it is still highly significant that its language is almost exclusively native. Perhaps it is interesting to note that over half of Milton's vocabulary appears in the Basic English list of Ogden and Richards.

[8]Well over eighty in the hundred-odd words of the poem. Only five words are more than two syllables long, and three of these are proper names. One effect of this predominance of monosyllables is to draw the poem out, make it seem longer than it really is, and thus give the impression of weight to what is said.

[9]This biblical concept of a justly recording God, a favorite with Milton, appears in somewhat different form in *Lycidas* and *Paradise Regained*.

[10]Compare the similar idea in *Areopagitica*: "For God sure esteems the growth and compleating of one vertuous person, more then the restraint of ten vitious" (*The Works of John Milton, op. cit.*, IV, 320).

[11]One is reminded of the devils and the golden fruit in *P. L.*, X, 547-71.

[12]With some allowance, the figure may be thought to blend the parable of the sower and the legend of the dragon's teeth.

CLAUDIUS NOT A PATCHOCK

By S. A. Tannenbaum

Thirteen years ago I suggested in the pages of the Shakespeare Association Bulletin that in *Hamlet,* III, ii,300, just after the play-scene, the exhilarated and excited Prince called his villain-uncle a 'puttock' (a buzzard), the antithesis of 'Jove' (symbolised by the eagle) of whom Denmark had been 'dismantled,' (stripped). The oldest texts (the earliest Quartos and the first two Folios) read 'Paiock' and 'Paiocke'; Rowe, without a word of explanation, substituted 'pajock'—a word unknown to the English language before that time—and has been followed by almost all editors since then. Many scholars and editors disapproved of the substitution and proposed other emendations, 'patchock' and 'puttock' among them. My case for 'puttock' was based on the facts that in Gothic secretary script (the script in general use then) 'putock' could easily have been misread by the compositor as 'paiock' and that 'puttock' makes good sense.

In the current issue of *The Journal of English and Germanic Philology* (July 1945, 44:202-05) Mr. Roland M. Smith, of the University of Illinois, gives reasons for reading 'pajock'; in fact, he says that '*pajock* needs no emending.' He attributes my objections to 'pajock' to my 'pathetic confidence in the adequacy of NED' which is authority for the statement that 'pajock' occurs nowhere else in Elizabethan literature. Thereupon he informs his readers that in 1943 he had pointed out that 'McGrath [quoted by Furness], followed by Skeat, . . . [had] observed that *pajock* occurs earlier in Spenser's *View of the Present State of Ireland* [written in 1596, published in 1633] as *patchock,* which NED similarly labels 'known only in the passage cited'. The passage to which Mr. Smith refers described certain 'degenerate English as 'very patchockes as the wild Irish,'—an expression which, Mr. Smith says, Spenser 'apparently expected . . . to be readily understood by his English readers.' Students of Spenser know that he

employed many words which were not 'readily understood' by his contemporaries.

There are several serious—in fact, fatal—objections to the case Mr. Smith has built, but before we consider these it may be pointed out that he has not shown the NED to have been wrong in its statements regarding the uniqueness of both 'pajock' and 'patchock.' He does not refer us to a single other instance of the occurrence of either of these two words. Had he done so, he would have proved the NED wrong and would have been justified in his lament about my 'pathetic confidence' in that work.—And now to our objections to Mr. Smith's suggestion.

Mr. Smith seems to be unaware of the fact that there is no certainty that Spenser wrote 'patchok' in the passage cited. The NED is our authority for the statement that in 'Lambeth MS 510, which was the copy [of the *View*] submitted [by Spenser?] to the Archbishop of Canterbury for license, dated by Spenser and initialled E.S., . . . reads *patchcockes*. If Spenser's word was *patchcockes* it cannot be identified with *pajock*.

Secondly, no one knows what Spenser meant by the word *patchock*—if that was his word. On the authority of the Globe edition of the *View*, Mr. Smith says it meant *'the scumm of the Irish* dressed in their mantles or brats.' NED defines *patchock* thus: 'A term used by Spenser of the degenerate English in Ireland, either in reference to their character and habits, their mongrel breed, or their costume; a base or mean fellow, a ragamuffin.' Hamlet's uncle was not a ragamuffin, his costume was probably finer than his nephew's, he was not Irish, and he was not bred from worse stock than Hamlet. *Patchock* or *patchcock* is, therefore, hardly the word that Hamlet would have applied to his uncle. Obviously, if the meaning of the word is in doubt, it cannot be said to be applicable to Claudius.

Thirdly, even if we assume that Shakspere had the word *patchock* in mind, there appears no valid reason why he should have altered it to *pajock*. To Mr. Smith 'the

variation in spelling offers no real problem, for the interchange of *dz* [soft *g*] and *ts* [*ch*] is much older than the regular British — and American — pronunciation of spinach.' Mr. Smith cites the instance of Shakspere's Macmorris (in *Henry V,* III,ii) who says 'beseeched' for 'besieged.' It never seems to have struck Mr. Smith that Macmorris is in some respects a comic character and a dialect artist; Shakspere also makes him say *ish* for is, *Chrish* for *Christ,* and *breach* for *bridge.* His mispronunciations contribute to the humor of the scene. Hamlet is not a comic character and he does not mispronounce any words. There is no reason, therefore, for assuming that he would have said *pajock* if he had been thinking of *patchock.* And Mr. Smith surely knows that a superficial recemblance between two words does not prove identity; *beseech* is not the same as *besiege, marge* is not identical with *march, purge* with *perch,* etc.

Fourthly, Mr. Smith silently takes it for granted that the early *paiocke* equals *pajock.* The NED (*q.v*) is by no means sure of the identity of the two words. As a matter of fact, there is no good reason for making the identification. *Paiocke* may have been pronounced *pay-jock* or *padge-ock;* if it was pronounced *pay-jock* or, more probably *pay-ock,* it bore only a very remote resemblance to *pathock* and would not have suggested *pathock* to a theartical audience. That the letters *ai* frequently were sounded like *ay* is certain. (In the manuscript play of *Sir Thomas Moore* the word *Mayor* is invariably written *Maior.*) To take for granted, as Mr. Smith does, that the early *paiocke* is equivalent to Mr. Rowe's *pajock,* and therefore to a questionable *patchock,* is to be guilty of assuming what it is desired to prove—a very common error in logic.

Fifthly, Mr. Smith gives expression to the very farfetched and, I may say, fantastic notion that 'to the Elizabethans the imported word [i.e., *patchock*], had the added connotation of *patches* and recalled the motley of Patch, Wolsey's domestic fool who became Henry's court jester. In other words, we are asked to believe that Shakspere,

for no earthly reason, wrote *pajock* when he meant *patchock* and that he thought his audience would see an allusion to a 'mantled Irishman' in the syllable *patch* suggested by *padge*. There was no need for the introduction of an Irish word in the *Hamlet* passage, and if Shakspere had wished to refer to Patch he would not have done it in the roundabout and dubious manner suggested by Mr. Smith.

Mr. Smith's further comments on Irish mantles (*brats*) only becloud the issue and are so irrevelant that we may ignore them.

THE REALITY OF SHAKSPERE'S "SUPERS"

By William Bryan Gates

Every reader of Shakspere's plays can recall characters who are described but who never appear in the action. Even without the historical personages so treated, there are hundreds of such creatures, chiefly in the comedies and the comic parts of the history plays. Many of these wraiths have a distinct personality of their own, and some serve definite dramatic functions. Paraphrasing Falstaff's estimate of his own wit, they are not only realistic in themselves, but the cause that realism is in others. No other Elizabethan dramatist kept such a galaxy of supernumeraries or lavished such care on them or utilized them so skilfully to add the circumstantialness of real life to other personages or to situations.

For the further light they shed on Shakspere's art and verisimilitude, therefore, a few of the most significant unseen fictional or pseudo-historical characters will be considered under three heads: those that aid in the characterization of an active participant; those that help to make a situation more vivid; and those that figure in the antecedent action or the plot. (From a somewhat different point of view, Professor Alwin Thaler has set forth interesting comments on two of Shakspere's unseen characters—Rosaline and Mauldin.)[1]

The stature of Sir John Falstaff is considerably heightened by the lifelikeness of some unseen characters near him—some "supers" who stood for Shakespere's call. Like Chaucer's Friar, Falstaff apparently knew the taverns well, for besides haunting the Boar's-head Tavern, he alludes in a familiar manner to "my host at Saint Alban's" and "the red nose inn-keeper of Daventry."[2] According to Hostess Quickly, Master Smooth, a silk merchant living at the "Lubber's-head in Lumbert Street," has "indited" Falstaff to dinner,[3] but another silk dealer, a certain Master Dommelton, has evidently had all of Falstaff's acquaintance he wants. "What said Master Dommelton [inquires Sir John] about the [twenty-two yards of]

satin for my short cloak and my slops?" This unseen dealer's acumen is clearly revealed by the Page's reply: "He said, sir, you should procure him better assurance than Bardolph. He would not take his band and yours. He lik'd not the security."[4]

Though "never yet a breaker of proverbs," for, as the Prince says, "he will give the devil his due," Falstaff is certainly a breaker of promises. "Go bear this letter . . . [he orders his Page] to old Mistress Ursula, whom I have weekly sworn to marry since I perceiv'd the first white hair of my chin."[5] While Mistress Ursula vainly awaits a call from Sir John (and from the dramatist), "good wife Keech, the butcher's wife," likewise stands in the wings ready to rush in again "to borrow a mess of vinegar" and testify that Falstaff has also promised to marry Hostess Quickly and make her his lady.[6]

Allusions to a host of supernumeraries add humor and circumstantialness to the garrulous reminiscences of Falstaff's friend, Justice Shallow:

> By the mass [swears Shallow] . . . I would have done anything. There was I and little John Doit of Staffordshire and black George Barnes and Francis Pickbone and Will Squele, a Cots'ol' man. You had not four such swingebucklers in all the Inns o' Court again. . . . We knew where the bona robas were and had the best of them all at our commandment.

Though Falstaff is probably correct when he declares Shallow's "every third word a lie," the Justice claims to have fought "one Sampson Stockfish, a fruiterer, behind Gray's Inn" on the same day that Falstaff broke Skogan's head "at the court gate." He laments the death of "old Double [who] drew a good bow; [and] shot a fine shoot," and he inquires solicitously about one of the bona robas, Jane Nightwork, mother of Robin Nightwork. For further humor of incongruity, this stupid justice's "cousin William," son to that incomparable ninny, Justice Silence, is said to be "a good scholar" at Oxford.[7]

Even the social consciousness of marriageable young ladies is emphasized by references to unseen characters.

Since Dumain and Longaville of *Love's Labor's Lost* have been seen in such illustrious company as that at the Duke Alencon's and the marriage feast of Lord Perigort and "the beauteous heir of Jaques Falconbridge,"[8] their ladies are satisfied as to their suitors' social standing. Likewise, Bassanio of *The Merchant of Venice* is proved an eligible suitor for Portia's hand by the fact that he first came to Belmont in the company of the distinguished Marquis of Montferrat.[9]

To enhance the prowess of young Orlando, who overcomes the duke's powerful wrestler as easily as he overcomes the fair Rosalind, Shakspere paints a graphic picture of an unseen old man whose three sons have just been vanquished by the wrestler:

> Yonder they lie; the poor old man, their father, making such a pitiful dole over them that all beholders take his part with weeping.[10]

The intelligence of Slender in *The Merry Wives of Windsor* is made more evanescent by the fact that this young man is said to have paid the unseen Yead Miller two shillings two pence each for "two Edward shovel-boards,"[11] for though these large, smooth one-shilling pieces were in demand for playing shovel-board, more than double their face value would indicate that the unseen Yead had caught a cony. Perhaps Slender's lack of ardor in wooing fair Mistress Anne Page may have been due partly to one Alice Shortcake, who is hovering in the wings and to whom Slender lent his *Book of Riddles* "upon all-hallowmas last."[12]

Nobility, or the lack of it, is dramatically portrayed by means of unseen characters. The ignoble character of Bertram in *All's Well That Ends Well,* for example, is effectively set forth by the contrast between Bertram and his deceased father, fully characterized as a gentleman of wit but without contempt or bitterness, two qualities prominent in his son's character.[13] Public confidence in the honor of Hermione in *The Winter's Tale,* after her husband has uttered scathing charges against her, is made graphic and concrete by Antigonus's oath that if Hermione proves false,

he will not let his three unseen little daughters ("eleven; . . . nine, and some five") live to bring forth "false generations."[14] Aaron the Moor in *Titus Andronicus* is made more colossal in his villany by his determination to kill the unseen Cornelia, the midwife who assisted at the birth of the black infant born to Queen Tamora, and by his plan to bribe the unseen wife of his countryman Muli to exchange her white child for the black one.[15]

The garrulous Nurse in *Romeo and Juliet* is rounded out in her garrulousness by her allusions to her daughter Susan, who was "too good" for her and hence is now "with God" and those to her husband, a "merry man," who broke a coarse jest on the three-years old Juliet.[16] The excessive generosity of Timon of Athens, who gave not wisely but too well, is emphasized by a scene in which Timon graciously endows his servant with a large sum of money merely so that this servant may become an acceptable suitor for the hand of an unseen Athenian lady who doubtless waited without.[17] The haughty Coriolanus successfully begs freedom for an unseen man who has befriended him, but when asked his benefactor's name, he cries, "By Jupiter! Forgot, . . . My memory is tir'd."[18]

It is true that Coriolanus would be a haughty and arrogant personage without the touch about forgetting the name of his benefactor. Falstaff would be known as a haunter of taverns and a breaker of promises without the unseen red-nosed inn-keeper of Daventry or Mistress Ursula. Hermione would still be an honorable matron without Antigonus's threat to the three little girls hovering in the wings. Yet, Shakspere's dramatic use of such unseen personages is one of the reasons why his active characters are so true to life that critics occasionally forget they are not flesh and blood creatures.

Unseen personages are frequently used also to make a situation more lifelike. In *Richard III,* for example, immediately after the Duke of Clarence has been executed at the order of the King, the Earl of Derby pleads for a pardon for an unseen man—one of his servants "who slew today a riotous gentleman Lately attendant on the Duke of Norfolk." The King himself, now contrite over the

execution of Clarence, comments on the bitter irony of being asked to pardon another man's servant for doing what he has just done to his own brother.[19]

Some of the most graphic portrayals of unseen characters used to make a situation more lifelike appear in the account which a porter gives of the crowd pressing up to the palace gate to see the christening of Princess Elizabeth in *Henry VIII*:

> There is a fellow somewhat near the door [declares the assistant porter], he should be a brazier by his face, for, o' my conscience, twenty of the dog-days now reign in's nose; . . . that fire-drake did I hit three times on the head, and three times was his nose discharged against me. . . . There was a haberdasher's wife of small wit near him. that rail'd upon me till her pink'd porringer fell off her head. . . . I miss'd the meteor once, and hit that woman; who cried out "Clubs!" when I might see from far some forty truncheoners draw to her succour, which were the hope o' the Strand, where she was quartered. They fell on; I made good my place; at length they came to the broomstaff to me; I defi'd 'em still; when suddenly a file of boys behind 'em, loose shot, deliver'd such a shower of pebbles, that I was fain to draw mine honour in, and let 'em win the work.[20]

In the comedies, even more than in the histories, are unseen characters used to vivify situations. Full of farcical humor and at the same time a skilful parody of the leave-taking between Proteus and Julia is the account which Launce in *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* gives of his departure from his family:

> My mother weeping, my father wailing, my sister crying, our maid howling, our cat wringing her hands.[21]

Likewise excellent for its parody of the excessive amount of lovemaking in the play is Launce's falling in love and giving a "catlog" of the unseen lady's "condition"—a creature having "more qualities than a water-spaniel."[22] By the limitations of the plot of *The Two Gentlemen*, Julia can be shown with only one active suitor; yet it is unthinkable that the heroine of a romance should have only one admirer. The deficiency is remedied by leaving unseen Sir Eglamour, "well-spoken, neat, and fine," and Mercatio, of whose wealth Julia's maid thinks "well," but of himself only "so, so."[23]

This device is employed with greater artistry and effectiveness in *The Merchant of Venice,* for, of course, the wealthy and beauteous Portia must have more suitors than the number actually shown on the stage; the two who make bad guesses, and the hero, who, naturally, guesses the correct casket. Five unseen suitors, graphically portrayed, testify to Portia's popularity. The Neapolitan Prince, says Portia, is "a colt, indeed, for he doth nothing but talk of his horse"; the County Palatine "doth nothing but frown." She will let Monsieur Le Bon "pass for a man" since "God made him." Though Baron Falconbridge and Portia have no common tongue for discourse, she cannot abide him anyway:

> How oddly he is suited! I think he bought his doublet in Italy, his round hose in France, his bonnet in Germany, and his behaviour everywhere.

The Scottish Lord, she declares

> hath a neighborly charity in him, for he borrowed a box of the ear of the Englishman and swore he would pay him again when he was able.

She holds the Nephew of the Duke of Saxony

> very vilely in the morning, when he is sober, and most vilely in the afternoon, when he is drunk. When he is best, he is little worse than a man, and when he is worst, he is little better than a beast.[24]

The lively Touchstone of *As You Like It* pokes mild sport at the lovers of the play as he tells of his own love for a certain Jane Smile, no doubt left waiting at the church long ago, just as she is left waiting by Shakspere:

> I remember, when I was in love I broke my sword upon a stone, and bid him take that for coming a-night to Jane Smile; and I remember the kissing of her batler and the cow's dugs that her pretty chopt hands had milked. . . . We that are true lovers run into strange capers.[25]

The most significant unseen characters in *The Merry Wives of Windsor* are the famous fat woman of Brainford, in whose tent-like gown Sir John Falstaff escapes the wrathful Ford,[26] and the Germans who make off with three horses belonging to the Host of the Garter Inn.[27] Whether the dramatist was using topical material and intended

these to be portraits from the life is beside the point. Much realism is added by the unseen witch of Brainford and those Germans who threw Bardolph off his horse and fled away "like three German devils, three Doctor Faustuses."[28]

Measure for Measure has an unusually large number of unseen characters used to make more vivid the sordid conditions prevailing in the city. Besides Kate Keepdown, whom the despicable Lucio had promised to marry,[29] there is in jail a host of young-men-about-town, probably all better left unseen:

> First [says Pompey], here's young Master Rash . . . in for a commodity of brown paper and old ginger, nine-score and seventeen pounds; . . . Then is there here one Master Caper, at the suit of Master Three-pile the mercer, for some four suits of peach-colour'd satin, . . . Then we have young Dizzy, and young Master Deep-vow, and Master Copper-spur, and Master Starve-lackey the rapier and dagger man, and young Drop-heir that killed lusty Pudding, and Master Forth-light the tilter, and brave Master Shooty the great traveller, and wild Half-can that stabb'd Pots, and, I think, forty more; all great doers in our trade.[30]

Similar corruption is portrayed in *Pericles* by means of some unseen personages, very unsavory in themselves. "A poor Transylvanian" has just died of a disease caught in the brothel of Mytilene from a "little baggage . . . [who] quickly pop'd him . . . [and] made him roast-meat for worms."[31] When Boult the pander proclaims the beauty of Marina, the new acquisition, "a Spaniard's mouth . . . wat'red," and Monsieur Verrolus, "a French knight . . . offered to cut a caper at the proclamation."[32]

Of the many allusions to the "paragon" and "rarest" creature, Claribel, daughter of King Alonso in *The Tempest,* the most significant serves to add vividness to Gonzalo's account of that miraculous shipwreck in which the courtiers' garments, though soaked in salt water, remain, says Gonzalo, "now as fresh as when we put them on first in Africa, at the marriage of the King's fair daughter Claribel to the King of Tunis."[33]

In the tragedies the most significant use of unseen characters to add reality to a situation appears in *Othello* as Desdemona dwells with almost prophetic insight on her

mother and the maid Barbara just before she herself is smothered in her bed:

> My mother had a maid call'd Barbara;
> She was in love, and he she lov'd prov'd mad
> And did forsake her. She had a song of "willow"; . . .
> And she died singing it. That song to-night
> Will not go from my mind. I have much to do
> But to go hang my head all at one side
> And sing it like poor Barbara.[34]

Though none of the foregoing situations would be essentially changed without the unseen supernumeraries, the effect would be weakened without them. By lavishing his skill on such items of background as unseen personages, Shakspere added another cubit to his stature as a dramatist.

Unseen characters are also used as a part of the plot. Among those so used in the history plays, by far the best is the non-historical character brought into *1 Henry IV* to demand the prisoners captured by Hotspur at Holmedon—prisoners the Percys did not want to give up because of King Henry's refusal to ransom Mortimer. The unseen fop described by Hotspur furnishes a dramatic, not merely a historical, reason for the refusal to give up the prisoners:

> My liege, I did deny no prisoners.
> But I remember, when the fight was done,
> When I was dry with rage and extreme toil,
> Breathless and faint, leaning upon my sword,
> Came there a certain lord, neat, trimly dress'd,
> Fresh as a bridegroom; . . . perfumed like a milliner; . . .
> With many holiday and lady terms
> He question'd me; amongst the rest, demanded
> My prisoners in your Majesty's behalf.
> I then, all smarting with my wounds being cold,
> To be so pest'red with a popinjay, . . .
> Answer'd negligently—I know not what
> He should, or he should not; for he made me mad
> To see him shine so brisk and smell so sweet
> And talk so like a waiting-gentlewoman.[35]

With such a creature as this appearing on the battlefield, demanding the prisoners, the sympathy of the audience will, momentarily at least, be on the side of the rebels.

The comedies contain a large number of supernumeraries who make the antecedent action more graphic or have

a part in the actual plot. Aegeon's lengthy narrative at the opening of *The Comedy of Errors,* for example, could hardly be told without its allusions to such specific personages as the Duke of Syracuse; groups of fishermen; the mother of the Dromios; and Aegeon's "most renowned uncle," Duke Menaphon, who brought one Antipholus from Corinth to Ephesus.[36]

At the beginning of *The Two Gentlemen of Verona,* it is dramatically necessary that Proteus should not accompany his friend Valentine to the emperor's court: he must first be shown in love with Julia. Later, however, it is essential that Proteus join his friend: He must prove false to both Julia and Valentine by attempting to win the love of Silvia. Two unseen characters help to motivate this delayed departure: the brother of Antonio, who has complained that his brother should not permit Proteus to remain idle at home; and Don Alphonso, whose convenient trip enables Antonio to send his son away in distinguished company.[37] More effective and significant use is made of an unseen character in the plot of *Love's Labor's Lost.* Since the pseudo-historical King of France is "decrepit, sick, and bed-rid," his daughter visits the kingdom of Navarre to inquire about the surrender of Aquitaine.[38] Thus she and the ladies of her train are provided an opportunity to meet King Ferdinand and his noble friends. The death of the King of France, announced in the course of the play,[39] motivates the somewhat hasty departure of the Princess and her ladies, and it enables these ladies to postpone giving their answers to their respective suitors.[40]

The "little changeling boy," the cause of the dispute between Titania and Oberon in *A Midsummer Night's Dream,* is clearly an unseen plot character.[41] The unseen aunt of Lysander, "a dowager of great revenue," just missed having a part in the plot since her house, seven leagues from Athens, was to have been the meeting place of Lysander and Hermia.[42] The very mainspring of the plot of *The Merchant of Venice* is, of course, an unseen character: Portia's deceased father, "an ever virtuous man," who devised the lottery whereby his daughter's husband should be selected.[43] Also important in the plot is Bellario, "the

learned doctor" from whom Portia secured the legal advice that freed Antonio.[44]

In *As You Like It,* Corin's unseen master, a fellow of "churlish disposition," is conveniently anxious to sell his property just as Rosalind and Celia reach the Forest of Arden, and thus they easily circumvent the housing shortage.[45] Another unseen plot character in this play is the old religious man by whom Duke Frederick "was converted. Both from his enterprise [of pursuing his brother] and from the world."[46] Necessary antecedent action motivating the mourning of Olivia in *Twelfth Night* is provided through allusions to the lady's father and brother.[47] The gulling of Malvolio proceeds the more effectively because he remembers that the unseen Lady of the Strachy "married the yeoman of the wardrobe."[48] An unseen personage is used for identification at the arrest of Antonio: "Orsino," says the arresting officer, "this is that Antonio . . . that did the *Tiger* board, When your young nephew Titus lost his leg."[49]

By means of "prescriptions of rare and prov'd effect," left her by her father, Helena of *All's Well That Ends Well* heals the King of France and in recompense is allowed to choose the unwilling Bertram for her husband.[50] The unseen Austria's calling for help against the Siennese motivates Bertram's hasty departure from his despised bride.[51] Maudlin, the unseen daughter of Lafeu, plays a part in the denouement of *All's Well.* When the ring which Bertram proposes to send Maudlin proves to be the one given by the King to Helena, Bertram is arrested on suspicion that he has murdered Helena.[52]

The loss at sea of Mariana's brother, "Frederick, the great soldier," and her dowry with him, is an important plot element in *Measure for Measure.* "Pretending in her discoveries of dishonour," Angelo breaks his betrothal to Mariana[53] and thus makes possible the incident in which she takes Isabella's place when Isabella is supposed to purchase her brother's life from Angelo at the cost of her own honor.[54] The unseen Ragozine, that "most notorious pirate," dies of "a cruel fever" just in time for his head to

be sent to Angelo, and thus he saves the life of both Claudio and that rogue Barnardine,[55] literally too bad to be hanged.

Dionyza in *Pericles* promises to care for Marina as though the child were her own, but when Marina's popularity far surpasses that of her own daughter, the unseen Philoten, Dionyza bribes Leonine to do away with Marina.[56] Another unseen personage, however, the "great pirate Valdes," has a band of thieves who rescue Marina from Leonine[57] and thus preserve her for what seems destined to be "a fate worse than death." Sycorax, that notable witch alluded to so often in *The Tempest,* is one of Shakspere's most fascinating unseen characters, but her dramatic function lies chiefly in the presentation of the antecedent action—in the fact that she gave birth to the monster Caliban and confined Ariel in a cloven pine.[58]

Among unseen characters figuring in the plot of the tragedies undoubtedly Rosaline in *Romeo and Juliet* is the most significant. It is seeing his beloved's name on the guest list for the Capulet ball that causes Romeo to go (masked, of course) to this party, hoping to catch a glimpse of Rosaline.[59] Instead, he catches a glimpse of Juliet. Rosaline is thus the instrument of fate in bringing together the "pair of star-crossed lovers" and therefore an important plot element. Is she really an unseen character? Is she not to be found among the crowd so summarily dismissed as "Guests and Maskers"? The unseen "bare-foot brother" with whom Friar John is quarantined is also a plot figure since his delay was fatal to both hero and heroine.[60]

The handkerchief plays such an important part in *Othello* that the unseen characters involved in its history may be considered as having a plot function. "That handker," Othello tells Desdemona,

> Did an Egyptian to my mother give; . . .
> She, dying, give it me
> And bid me, when my fate would have me wiv'd,
> To give it her. . . .
> A sibyl, that had numb'red in the world
> The sun to course two hundred compasses,
> In her prophetic fury sew'd the work.[61]

In *Timon of Athens* an unseen friend of General Alcibiades kills a man for impugning his honor. The Senate rejects Alcibiades' plea for his friend,[62] just as it has rejected Timon's pleas for mercy. As a result, Alcibiades, like Timon, turns in wrath against his native city and her citizens. The unseen character furnishes the sole motivation for this element of the plot.

If Shakspere's active participants and dramatic situations are more vivid and lifelike than those of any other dramatist, a part of the credit should be given to his use of these beings who served him by only standing and waiting—waiting for a cue that never came. How many fictional characters thus awaited the dramatist's call, no one can ever know. The majority of the hundreds alluded to are, of course, mere shadows, like Lamb's dream children—"only what have been." Some, like Sycorax and Portia's suitors, are as real as many a character that struts across the stage, full of sound and fury. A few favored "supers" almost gain a place before the footlights: the fop who demanded Hotspur's prisoners, for example, or, better still, the fair Rosaline—seen, yet unseen.

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[1]*Shakspere's Silences* (Harvard University Press, 1929), pp. 35-36 and 57-59. In each category of the present study, representative unseen characters have been chosen from each of the three types of plays: histories, comedies, and tragedies. References are to *The Complete Plays and Poms of William Shakespeare,* edited by Neilson and Hill (Boston, 1942).

[2]1 *Hen. IV,* IV, ii, 50-51.

[3]2 *Hen. IV,* II, i, 30-32.

[4]2 *Hen. IV,* I, ii, 32-38; 48-50.

[5]2 *Hen. IV, I, ii,* 266-271

[6]2 *Hen. IV,* II, i, 92-112.

[7]2 *Hen. IV,* III, ii, 6-54; 211-224; 329-330.

[8]*L. L. L.,* II, i, 40-43; 61.

[9]*Mer. Ven.,* I, ii, 122-128.

[10]*A. Y. L. I., I,* ii, 129-140.

[11]*Merry Wives,* I, i, 158-160.

[12]*Merry Wives,* I, i, 210-212.

[13]*All's Well,* I, ii, 24-48.

[14]*Wint. Tale,* II, i, 144-148.

[15]*Tit. And.,* IV, ii, 140-168.

[16]*R. & J.,* I, iii, 19-48.

[17]*Tim. of Ath.,* I, i, 116-151.

[18]*Coriolanus,* I, ix, 79-90.

[19]*Rich. III,* II, i, 95-134. Something of Shakspere's art in creating these unseen personages can be seen in the way this character is developed from a mere generaliza-

tion in Holinshed: "When anie person sued to him [the king] for the pardon of malefactors condemned to death, he would accustomablie saie: 'Oh infortunate brother for whose life not one would make sute'." (Holinshed, III, 703. Quoted in the (English) Arden Edition of *Richard III,* p. 70, n. 126.)

[20]*Hen. VIII,* V, iv. 40-61.
[21]*Two Gent.,* II, iii, 1-35.
[22]*Two Gent.,* III, i, 261-376.
[23]*Two Gent.,* I, ii, 10-13.
[24]*Mer. Ven.,* I, ii, 39-107.
[25] *A. Y. L.* I., II, iv, 46-56.
[26]*Merry Wives,* IV, ii, 77-89; 177-195.
[27]*Merry Wives,* IV, iii, 1-4.
[28]*Merry Wives,* IV, v, 65-74.
[29]*Meas. Meas.,* III, ii, 210-215; V, i, 513-527.
[30]*Meas. Meas.,* IV, iii, 1-21.
[31]*Pericles,* IV, ii, 23-26.
[32]*Pericles,* IV, ii, 107-118.
[33]*Tempest,* II, i, 58-98.
[34]*Othello,* IV, iii, 26-33.
[35]1*Hen.* IV, I, iii, 29-69.
[36]*Com. Er.,* I, i.
[37]*Two Gen.,* I, iii, 1-43.
[38] *L. L. L.,* I., i, 136-139.
[39]*L. L. L.,* V, ii, 726-729
[40]*L. L. L.,* V, ii, 811-880.
[41]*Mids. Dream,* II, i, 119-137.
[42]*Mds. Dream,* I, i, 156-163.
[43]*Mer. Ven.,* I, ii, 30-36.
[44]*Mer. Ven.,* IV, i, 105-170.
[45]*A. Y. L. I.,* II, iv, 80-100.
[46]*A. Y. L. I.,* V, iv, 160-171.
[47]*Twelfth Night,* I, i, 24-32; I, ii, 36-41
[48]*Twelfth Night,* II, v, 44-45.
[49]*Twelfth Night,* V, i, 64-66.
[50]*All's Well,* I, i, 30-31; I, iii, 227-237; II, iii, 52-63.
[51]*All's Well, I,* ii, 1-4; II, iii, 290-308.
[52]*All's Well,* V, iii, 67-127.
[53]*Meas. Meas.,* III, i, 216-239.
[54] *Meas. Meas.,* IV, i, 66.
[55]*Meas. Meas.,* IV, iii, 71-82.
[56]*Pericles,* IV, Gower, 11-53; IV, iii.
[57]*Pericles,* IV, i, 97-98.
[58]*Tempest,* I, ii, 257 ff, and passim.
[59]*R. & J., I,* ii, 67-106.
[60]*R. & J.,* V, ii, 5-12.
[61]*Othello,,* III iv, 55-75.
[62]*Tim. of Ath.,* III, v.

HUSBANDS IN SHAKSPERE

By Sibyl C. Holbrook

It would be an amusing experiment to line up a class in Psychology or Shakspere and ask the members individually to write down the first example of a husband in any of the plays of Shakspere that occurred to him or her when the term was mentioned. The romantic temperaments would light on Romeo, no doubt, though he was hardly more than the husband of an hour. The realists might bring up Mr. Ford or Mr. Page, those literal-minded foils to their Merrie Wives. To the historically-minded, one of the two more conspicuously uxorious monarchs would naturally occur—Richard III, or Henry VIII.

At first blush, a superficial reader might say that Shakspere did not "feature" the married state, but rather took it for granted, spending his zeal and creative gifts on Midsummer madness, idylls of a forest, an island, or studies in crime. But a more thoughtful survey shows that the relation is a cardinal one, right through his work, from the farcical level where Petruchio plays the exaggerated tyrant as a means of subduing his high-spirited wife to double harness, up to the sublime devotion pictured by Hamlet of his father's love for Gertrude.

Immediately the two husbands come to mind who make the worst possible use of the divine favor of a woman's love, namely Othello and Leontes, in both cases through the agency of the same green-eyed monster. In *The Winter's Tale,* the jealousy is less motivated than in *Othello,* yet no less does the whole plot hinge on this evil passion: no jealousy, no play.

Perhaps the most canny formula for peace in the married state is that of Antigonus, a rather humble courtier of Sicily, husband of the tart Paulina:

> "When she will take the rein, I let her run,
> But she'll not stumble." (II.iii. 51,52)

It is possible that the errand he accepts from his royal master, to take the new-born infant of Hermione "to some

remote and desert place quite out of our dominions" actually presents a welcome alternative to more of his wife's dictatorship, though he declares that "a present death had been more merciful." His final exit, pursued by a bear, has always seemed like loaded dice on Fate's part, but was dramatically necessary to give the proper touch of savagery to the scene.

Leafing through the plays, one becomes aware of the number of trifling good-for-naughts Shakspere had evidently observed among his bachelor friends: Romeo is a pest to his messmates; Bassanio runs into debt and cannot keep a promise; Orlando blames his brother Oliver for his own failure to amount to something; Claudio is ready to suspect the worst of his dainty bride; Bertram, Proteus, even Orsino are fickle and quite unworthy of the fine women who lose their hearts to them. Did their creator not have some indirect intent of showing that marriage stabilizes a chap?

Let us for convenience in analysis group the husbands under three heads: the romantic, the realistic, the historical.

We have already touched on Romeo: Ferdinand is a close second as ardent lover, but he shows qualities of proved devotion to his own family which augur rather better for his father's solicitude (I.i.140-145).

Hamlet, prince of Denmark, has no place in this gallery, but by implication he paints the supreme husband of all drama—the late King Hamlet who reached the top of admiration in his devotion to Gertrude: by comparison the usurping brother is not "twentieth part the tithe of your precedent lord" and the dead king.

> "Hyperion to a satyr. So loving to my mother
> That he might not beteem the winds of heaven
> Visit her face too roughly."

Othello, to begin with, is a thoroughly romantic husband—indeed he stays in the realm of romance and fantasy to the end, and never sees his frail young wife as she is. The marriage, in my opinion, never could have turned out well: seeing Robeson recently in the title-rôle brought home to me in a flash his unfitness as mate to a city-belle. He has all the caressing epithets at his tongue's end:

"O my soul's joy!" he cries on landing at Cyprus where she awaits him (II.i.186)

"Honey, you shall be well desir'd in Cyprus."

After the fracas, in which Cassio is wounded past surgery in his reputation, Othello says "Look, if my gentle love be not raised up" and soothes her with "All's well now, sweeting; come away to bed." But there is no deep amalgamation of souls. After all, Desdemona is no heroine, though her last words are gallant enough. Emilia, discovering her dying, screams "O who hath done this?" and she murmurs "Nobody. I myself"—which is perhaps a characteristic escape from fact. She has an empty little mind, which Othello's tall travel-tales filled to the brim. She is understandably enough in love with him still to be reluctant to stay at home alone while he campaigns against the Turks. But would a woman whose mind and heart were completely full of her husband indulge in the flirtatious small-talk that Desdemona initiates while waiting on the wharf with Iago, as they "throw out eyes" for the victor's vessel. The time must be passed somehow; but this striking at once of the note personal seems to me a revelation of the essentially light vain nature of the woman.

> "I am not merry," she begins, "but I do beguile
> The thing I am by seeming otherwise.
> Come, how wouldst thou praise me?" (II.1.123-125)

And she keeps on goading him to the impotent and lame conclusion that the finest type of woman is fit only to be a mother and housekeeper. Baulked of her compliment, she turns to Cassio to see what she can squeeze out of him before her lord appears.

Notable it is that immediately after this exhibition of her weakness comes Iago's prophecy to Roderigo that she will not long continue in love with her husband. He is a clever psychologist and this straw has served to show him which way the wind blows. "Her eye must be fed," and to "give a fresh appetite, there should be . . . sympathy in years, manners, and beauties, all which the Moor is defective in." The marriage was stitched together with fantastical lies, and it is beginning to sag apart.

Othello lacks the *savoir faire* which would enable him to look on coolly at another man's devotion before his particular shrine. Yet, rough and rude though he is, he puts commendable restraint on himself in the scene (III.iii) in which Desdemona tries to reconcile him with his disgraced lieutenant.

"Who is't you mean?" he asks to gain time. although he knows perfectly well.

"Went he hence now?" again a superfluous question, but in its brevity showing that he cannot meet his wife on her own ground of affectionate teasing. This, by the way, is her best scene; she is enchanting, but not too intelligent. Portia or Rosalind would have made short work of such unfounded suspicions; but then, neither Portia nor Rosalind would have taken Othello to her wedded husband.

Fed by circumstantial doses from Iago's hate-inspired imagination, the poison seeps through Othello's veins and maddens him. He is one of the men whom Oscar Wilde generalizes about, who "kill the thing they love," and so it was written in the stars of this ill-mated pair.

Far more unreasonable—and consequently less dramatic—is the jealousy that prompts Leontes to order his wife to prison. The curtain rises on a perfect picture of domestic accord: husband, his old childhood-friend as guest, Hermione, his beloved and trusted queen, mother of a quick-witted boy of twelve and soon to present him with a playmate. She bandies arch words about persuading—at her husband's suggestion—their royal guest (for he is no less than King of Bohemia) to prolong his stay, and then has a pretty passage of fooling with her husband, who tells her she never spoke to better advantage except when she promised to be his forever. So far, so good. But presto! As Hermione innocently gives her hand to Polixenes to seal the bargain, Leontes flies into a furor of sensual, suspicious jealousy, unworthy a husband or a king of his standing.

> "Too hot, too hot!
> To mingle friendship far is mingling bloods . . .
> I have tremor cordis on me."

Indeed his state of mind does plainly declare itself a physical infirmity. This "sticks more fiery off" against the background of Camillo's steadfastness in his Queen's defence. He is a long-trusted courtier and confidant, yet such is Leontes' obsession that he does not spare him reproach, insinuation, even abuse:

"We have been deceiv'd in thy integrity;" "thou art a coward . . . or else a fool." One may gather from this the sort of husband Leontes has been in the past: if not till now acutely jealous, still petty in his outlook, unreasonable in his conclusions, lacking faith and dignity. When at last Camillo hears the accusation he does not mince his words.

> "I would not be a stander-by to hear
> My sovereign mistress clouded so, without
> My present vengeance taken. Shrew my heart!
> You never spoke what did become you less."

But Leontes is past shame—utterly blinded by jealousy and even incited to thoughts of murder. He has given Camillo special charge of Polixenes' comfort at the Court. "How easy is it then." He suggests point-blank that the steward "bespice a cup" to speed the guest's departure from more than Sicily, and in return for Leontes' promise to restore Hermione to favor, Camillo bargains in crime. But he is no villain. He does not hesitate to double-cross the actual villain, and in a frank interview with the Bohemian prince, tells him of the plot and urges a speedy escape, which he will arrange and share.

So much for Leontes in Act I as sample of a husband. Let us see if grief and time work any material improvement in him. In Act V we find him bemoaning his lost wife:

> "The sweet'st companion that e'er man
> Bred his hopes out of."

He declares to courtiers who urge him to marry for the sake of an heir (the promising young Mamilius having died at the report of his mother's death in prison.)

> "No more such wives, therefore no wife."

Yet, before the scene is over, he incurs a rebuke from Paulina for casting sheep's eyes at the lovely young Perdita.

"Sir, my liege, your eye hath too much youth in't." (V.1.225)

He has protested too much and too long: one feels that he is ripe for a new love-affair. Fortunately the former one is at hand in a novel and romantic guise. When he recognizes in the statue his wife Hermione miraculously restored to him, he is again extravagant even to paradox.

"No settled senses of the world can match
The pleasure of that madness." (ibid. 72-73)

And when Paulina tells him that she has more in store, he asserts that

"This affliction has a taste as sweet
As any cordial comfort." (ibid. 76-77)

But the slightness of his nature is shown by his almost perfunctory amends when all is said and done:

" . . . . Both your pardons
That e'er I put between your holy looks
My ill suspicion." (ibid. 148-149)

No, we cannot hoist Leontes to any pedestal. He stands pretty low on the list of Shakspere's husbands. Though his crime falls short of Othello's, so does his suffering. Reasons are quite evident, on a little study, for *The Winter's Tale* never having achieved any great popularity, in spite of its scenic possibilities and two delightful heroines.

We turn to another royal lover—Macbeth. The masterly economy of this play is seen by the comparatively few touches which convincingly show a rare attachment.

Macbeth proves, on close study, one of the tenderest of husbands. More than this, his wife is the very motive-centre of his being. When he has won his first notable success in the field against the Norweigians allied with the Irish, and been hailed as future king by the Weird Sisters, he cannot wait till the journey home is over, but sends a messenger ahead with a letter to his wife. He may have doubts of himself, but never of his "dearest love." Note that he gives her that greeting with his first breath on entrance; the news that "Duncan comes here tonight," with the second. (I.v.159).
Between the two, we see him fold her in his arms. She is

so close, so completely a part of him that she does not need to be told what is on his mind. Only his lack of confidence finds no echo in her. When he wavers, her scorn flays him.

> "Was the hope drunk
> Wherein you dress'd yourself?" (I.vii.35)

And when he protests that he dares do all that may become a man, she lashes out with

> ". . . What beast was't then
> That made you break this enterprise to me?" (ibid.57)

He had apparently broached it to her in an unacted interview prior to the opening of the play.

Still, neither this contempt nor the callousness with which she dismisses the consequences of murder—"A little water clears us of this deed.. (II.ii. 67)—seems to nibble at his firm-set attachment. In the short scene before Banquo's taking off (III.ii) Macbeth's endearments are spontaneous: "So shall I, love," and "Be innocent of the knowledge, dearest chuck." Thus far, they are the young high-spirited pair who chose each other because of matching tempers and ardent desires.

The gradual working of the shared criminal secrets on their minds and characters is the true tragedy of *Macbeth*. Lady Macbeth's access of fierceness was really so foreign to her nature as to upset her reason. Her husband, steeped in gore, with his back to the wall, has only perfunctory thoughts and words for her, now that she has left the center of his life.

> "How does your patient, Doctor?" (V.111.37)
> . . . Cure her of that! (ibid. 39)

Brusquely he turns to his own case, listing the written troubles of the brain, the stuff'd bosom, and other names for a guilty conscience; then scornfully asks

> "What rhubarb, senna or what purgative drug
> Would scour these English hence?" (ibid. 52-53)

When the half-expected outcry comes, with the news, "The Queen, my Lord, is dead" (V.v.16) the lover of her youth, her manly counterpart in early growth and ambition, the tyrant who has craved power largely for her sake, has

only the bitterest epitaph of all known language to bestow on her poor life—"signifying nothing." After that the triumph of Macduff can hurt him little.

One of Shakspere's earliest productions was the *Comedy of Errors,* an adaptation of a Greek farce. Yet we shall find that same jealousy, which was a motive of high tragedy, is not confined to the romances, but often is the outward and visible sign of a thoroughly pedestrian emotion. Take Antipholus of Ephesus, for example. He has apparently been on the whole a satisfactory husband, in spite of minor lapses, since Adriana is piqued when he is late for dinner. He cares enough for her good graces to order a gold chain made by a goldsmith though, to be sure, when she flouts him, it does not take him long to think up another likely wearer. But his wife remains possessive, and we conclude that Antipholus had a way with him. Even after he has threatened to scratch out her eyes for supposed insults, she insists on having him brought home (to be cured of alleged mania) rather than to a jail. He uses diversely an iron crowbar, a rope's end, his fists to cuff the conjurer, and breaks loose from the constable—not all in the cause of Love according to the Troubadours, but smarting from denial of his marital rights.

Classic times were not so different from Elizabethan (then modern) times. Writing of Windsor, Shakspere invents the realistic husband Master Ford, who has, for all his realism, an imagination that torments him. Being told by Pistol, Falstaff's discharged man, that the Fat Knight is laying siege to his wife's virtue, he does not at first grasp the mercenary motive of the suit.

"Why, my wife is not young!" is his first shocked reflection (II.i.115). Still, he considers further, he would be loath to turn them together. A man may be too confident (II.i.193). But his indecision does not last long; he contrives a plot to test his wife. Getting an interview with Falstaff, he lays before him what the Knight quite truly dubs "a preposterous suggestion:" that he shall start dislodging the strong edifice of Mistress Ford's resistance, so that, when it begins to slide, he (in his alias of Brook) shall receive and profit by it. The ruse succeeds for the moment,

far enough for Falstaff to brag of his appointment with the lady for next morning, thus warning Ford as to time and place.

"A little knowledge is a dangerous thing," and Ford goes away in no enviable frame of mind:

"Who says this is improvident jealousy? My wife hath sent to him, the hour is fix'd, the match is made. See the hell of having a false woman." (II.ii.300-302).

At the appointed time for the rendezvous, Ford goes to his house, well-fortified with neighbors, but fails to discover the culprit, who is bundled out, almost under his eyes, in a basket of foul linen. A second time, he gets wind of an appointed meeting and this time explores the laundry-basket himself, but without finding a trace of the Fat Knight. Mistress Page disguises him as an old witch-woman, and leads him out of the house. Then their pique is satisfied, and they confess to Ford their real intent, which was to discomfit the smug suitor who presumed to think he could snare two birds with one trap. Ford declares that his faith in his wife is henceforth firm and asks her pardon for the momentary doubt.

But sentimental considerations are not all with this realistic husband: at Falstaff's final roasting on the hill at midnight, he does not fail to remind him of the money lent him by one Master Brook, which will be "a biting affliction" to repay. A still deeper tinge of realism might make him see that same money as melted as spring snow, for it does not lie in Falstaff's nature to repay anything.

Petruchio, Tamer of the Shrew, is surely the frankest and the rankest realist of all the husbands. He announces on his first appearance, that he has come "to wive it, wealthily in Padua," which he considers synonymous with "happily in Padua (I.2.73). Hearing of the shrew Katherine, eldest daughter to the affluent Baptista, he makes straight toward the match. He has heard the roar of desert lions, ocean storms and enemy's cannon, and is not likely to be halted by threats of a woman's tongue.

> "That gives not half so great a blow to th' ear
> As will a chestnut in a farmer's fire." (ibid. 209-210)

Before he even meets the girl, he comes to plain terms with her father:

> "Then tell me, if I get your daughter's love
> What dowry shall I have with her to wife?" (II.1.120-121)

When he does meet her, this naked realism decks itself in all sorts of extravagances, but his real intent is no whit disguised. He intends to win her by implied flattery, to master her by sheer force of will, and to cure her bad habit of "curstness" by making her love as well as fear him. After some fencing with wits, she gives it up as futile, and he comes out with the plain statement:

> "I am he am born to tame you, Kate." (II.1.278)

How he goes about the taming is familiar farce, but perhaps the psychology of his "line" has not been overstressed. He determines, first of all, that she shall be stingingly aware of him. He will be conspicuous by his absence at the appointed time and place for the marriage-ceremony. When he comes, it will be so turned-out that he cannot be overlooked. Then he breaks with custom further, by insisting on their departure before even drinking the host Baptista's health, though Katherine does her utmost to make him stay. He puts into his final defiance of her kinsmen just the touch of possession and protection that would appeal to her, however superfluous, for of course she is in no actual danger.

> "Now for my bonny Kate, she must with me, . . .
> I will be master of what is mine own.
> Fear not, sweet wench; they shall not touch thee, Kate.
> I'll buckler thee against a million."

Through the divers measures that Petruchio takes, we should look in vain for anything but realism. He will starve her of food, of sleep, tantalize her with offers of gifts withdrawn before she can grasp them, impress on her that she cannot tell time, and, in sum, teach her to rely on him for all essentials. The method seems to work, if the transformation in the last scene is to be taken at face-value. Not all actresses so interpret it: Lynn Fontane was obviously sneering and ironical, but this grated on the listener, and reduced the story to naught. Ada Rehan, in the

Nineties, was far more convincing. May I submit my suspicion that much history lies between the Acts. Petruchio, who unquestionably is a rare charmer, may have got in some very deadly work in their intervals of quarrelling, when he laid aside the tamer for the lover. The warmth and sheer masculinity of him must have fascinated Katherine, who had never known a real *man,* only sycophants to her father and wishy-washy gallants paying court to her sister. She is big enough herself to respond to his robustness, woman enough to be drawn by his magnetic virility into admiring, and then adoring her master—even as he foretold she would do.

In the most passionately romantic of all the dramas—*Romeo and Juliet*—is the last place we should look, offhand, for a realistic husband. Yet such is Shakspere's unfailing sense of balance and contrast that he brings into the almost unbearable tragedy of the Verona household more than a note—almost a sub-theme—of the practical and mundane, which serves to relieve the gloom, yet by its very homeliness to make it more intimate and heartfelt.

Capulet, Juliet's father, is an immortal type. We find him in Dickens, and down to Clarence Day. Indeed we can easily picture the poor girl's "Life With Father" had been difficult enough to make her ready for elopement with a less eligible or persuasive lover than Romeo. Capulet is the under-educated, over-blooded, man of good family, who has never himself done anything to brag of, yet is ready to find fault at short notice with those near and beneath him. To those outside the immediate circle he has a fussy sort of geniality that stimulates his own sense of importance. He fancies himself especially as host at a soirée. He enjoys hinting at his own gay youth as he urges guests to dance. So high are his spirits that he does not resent the intrusion of young Romeo, his feudal enemy's son, when Tybalt recognizes him under his mask, and growls that he will kill him.

TYB. "I'll not endure him.
CAP. He shall be endur'd.
What, goodman boy? I say he shall. Go to!
Am I the master here or you? Go to!" (I.v.78-80)

His zest for his own authority also prompts him in the matter of disposing of his daughter's hand—and it is this advanced timing that brings the fatal result. Paris has asked on this very first evening, permission to pay his suit to Juliet, but was on that occasion put off by her father who declared she was too young. Then intervenes the unfortunate street-brawl that robs both houses of a brilliant scion. Mercutio, of the Montagues, is mortally pricked by Tybalt, and Tybalt's life is taken by Romeo, to avenge his merry kinsman. Capulet now tries to be Destiny. He believes that public attention will be wholesomely diverted by a joyful event, and so decides, pronto, to wed his daughter to Paris, with feasting and gayety, and that no later than three days off.

He flies into a rage and can hardly keep his hands off her when the poor girl tearfully protests the prospect of so speedy a marriage. "My fingers itch," he says (III.5.65) and later, chafed by the remonstrances of his wife and the Nurse, his anger is so hot as almost to melt his reason. He threatens his one beloved child that if she does not obey him he will turn her out to

> "Graze where you will, you shall not house with me. (ibid. 190)
> . . . hang, beg, starve, die in the streets." (ibid. 194)

Violent as they are, these dreadful words are quite in character and are necessary to make Juliet's predicament the more desperate.

When she returns from a visit to her Confessor, declaring she has "repented the sin of disobedient opposition" (IV.2.18) Capulet's rage is abated, but his energy is still at boiling-point. To his wife's fretting lest the time is too short for proper provision, he replies by taking everything upon himself.

> "I'll not to bed to-night, let me alone.
> I'll play the housewife for this once." (ibid. 42-43)

First, as all the servants are scattered, he must go in person to notify the bridegroom that the wedding-day is advanced; then, at three in the morning, we find him urging on the cook, calling for drier logs, watching the sky for signs of dawn, at which time Paris is expected with his aubade.

Then when the Nurse suddenly bursts in with the news that she cannot waken her lady, Capulet is completely deflated.

> "Death is my heir;
> My daughter he hath wedded. I will die
> And leave him all. Alack, my child is dead
> And with my child my joys are buried." (IV.5.63-64)

Yet the ruling passion asserts itself: he *must* give orders:

> "All things that we ordainëd festival
> Turn from their office to black funeral—
> Our instruments to melancholy bells,
> Our solemn hymns to sullen dirges change,
> Our bridal flowers serve for a buried corse." (ibid. 2.84-88)

He does not die of course, but lives to get even with Montague, who in grief and reconciliation offers to erect a golden statue in memory of Juliet.

"As rich shall Romeo by his lady lie" (V.iii;301) insists his rival. From these few scenes, we can adequately deduce the sort of life that Lady Capulet led with the petty tyrant who charmed her youth—one of the most consistent, living portraits in this gallery of Shakspere's husbands.

Among the husbands who are historical figures, we might expect to find more realists than romantics, but as we explore, the lists draw themselves up with surprising impartiality.

In *Coriolanus,* we find a pure romantic, the true son of his mother. His deep reverence for this Roman lady, Volumnia, and his affection for his wife, are indisputable, yet both are subject to his profound egotism. Out of pique that Rome has not duly honored him, he goes over to her enemies; then vanity and sense of importance to his womenfolk cause him to weaken; he compounds with his native state, is sent against the Volscians and put to death by them as a traitor. His single love-speech is as touching as any utterance of its kind in all the plays:

> "Best of my flesh
> Forgive my tyranny . . . O a kiss
> Long as my exile, sweet as my revenge!

> Now by the jealous queen of heaven, that kiss
> I carried from thee, dear, and my true lip
> Hath virgin'd it e'er since." (V.iii.32-45)

Julius Caesar is on the realist side: Calphurnia's dreams and consequent fears and protests awake small tenderness in her husband; but when she kneels to him making the practical suggestion that a message be sent through Mark Anthony to the Senate, excusing him, he gives in. For a moment only: unguardedly he lets drop to Decius Brutus, one of the conspirators who calls for him, the reason for his absence, and the latter makes mince-meat of it in twenty lines. Such is the only picture we have of Caesar as husband, and it is not a highly flattering one.

Calphurnia is not the only restless wife on this portentous night in Rome. Portia, Cato's daughter and wife to Brutus, has been roused by the sound of voices, hushed steps, has seen masked faces below in the street, and she scents a nameless evil in the wind. She seeks out her husband as soon as he is alone, and taxes him with keeping dark secrets from her. She too betakes herself to her knees —a remnant of Oriental custom, plausible enough and sure to be effective on the stage. In this case, however, it does not prevail, though it elicits from Brutus one of the most exquisite declarations of seasoned love in all poetry:

> "You are my true and honorable wife,
> As dear to me as are the ruddy drops
> That visit my sad heart." (II.ii.288-291)

He might have yielded to a little more of her inspired pleading, but another conspirator knocks and the spell is broken. He puts her off with "By and by"—but that time never comes. Is he a romantic or a realist?

Turning to the English historical plays, there is a bewildering variety. In *King John,* nothing to our purpose. In *Richard II,* toward the last, in the short scene of the parting of the King and Queen, we get a whiff of the fragrance of early love. Although Richard's decision to send his wife home to France remains firm, he cannot speak to her without using terms of endearment every few lines:

"Join not with grief, fair woman . . .
Learn, good soul,
To think our former state a happy dream.
. . . I am sworn brother. sweet, to grim Necessity." (V.i.10 et seq.)

And finally, "One kiss shall stop our mouths and humbly part." (ibid. 95) In this miniature mirror, Richard's appealing charm and his fatal weakness are both clearly reflected.

The husband that comes instantly to mind, in turning to *King Henry IV,* Part I, is of course Harry Hotspur, whose wife, like Portia, is alarmed by the change in her husband's habits which proves some mighty business is afoot, and this she is bent on sharing. Lady Percy's complaint is the same as Portia's:

"For what offence have I this fortnight been
A banish'd woman from my Harry's bed?" (II.iii.42

and her reception no less baffling.

"I must not henceforth have you question me
Whither I go, nor reason thereabout . . .
Whither I must, I must: and, to conclude,
This evening must I leave you, gentle Kate.
I know you wise; but yet no farther wise
Than Harry Percy's wife; constant you are,
But yet a woman; and for secrecy,
No lady closer, for I well believe
Thou wil not utter what thou dost not know." (ibid. 06-114)

These two do not exchange fond names, but such as "mad-headed ape" and "you paraquito," as well as "my love," "my lady," and 'gentle Kate," testify to the intimacy and warmth of their relations. Again, a short scene, but an intense one.

King Henry Fifth's wooing of his French princess Katherine is one of the most enchanting scenes in Shakspere, but he cannot yet qualify as a husband.

The interest in *King Henry VI* is chiefly political, but there is a notable pair in Part II—Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester and his Duchess. Their first colloquy is a striking foretaste of the *Macbeth* motif. Dame Eleanor rebukes her husband for "drooping, knitting his brows," yet remaining passive.

"Put forth thy hand, reach at the glorious gold" (of the crown) she advises him (I.ii.11).

> "What, is't too short?
> I'll lengthen it with mine."

He patiently answers her with the spontaneously affectionate manner that we have by now come to observe as a genuine pattern for Shaksperian husbands:

> "O Nell, sweet Nell, if thou dost love thy lord,
> Banish the canker of ambitious thoughts." (Ibid.;7)

Yet for all these and other honeyed words, he will not share in her disgrace. When she has been caught listening to soothsayers, and plotting against the Crown, he declares:

> "Noble she is, but if she have forgot
> Honour and virtue and conversed with such
> As, like to pitch, defile nobility . . .
> I banish her my bed and company,
> And give her as a prey to law and shame
> That hath dishonour'd noble Gloucester's name."

This places the noble Gloucester about at the bottom of the scale, as far as "what becomes a man" goes—let alone a husband and a Duke. No doubt the scene is historical, not the dramatist's invention, in which Gloucester looks on as his wife passes in procession, bearing placards describing her crime. She bitterly upbraids him, probably in words supplied by the poet:

> For whilst I think I am thy mraried wife
> And thou a prince, Protector of this land,
> Methinks I should not thus be led along . . .
> And follow'd with a rabble that rejoice
> To see my tears and hear my deep-felt groans." (II.iv. 28-et seq.)

The fate of this pair could have originated the saying, if it were not already embalmed in Holy Writ, that "Pride goeth before a fall."

It remans for certain royal husbands to play Bluebeard. Richard III, though a very devil at wooing, had little staying-power as a husband, and is thought to have eased Queen Anne to her death—poor Anne, daughter of Warwick, and widow of Henry VI, slain by Richard in the Tower, yet

who cannot resist his fatal magnetism when he plays on her feelings over her husband's bier.

King Henry the Eighth, though husband to six women, is celebrated in his daughter's birthday-play (for as such, we are strongly bent to believe, this piece was produced) only down to the triumph of the second of these—Anne Boleyn, mother of Queen Elizabeth. The royal playmate is obviously smitten by a new arrival at the banquet in York Place:

> "The fairest hand I ever touch'd. O beauty,
> Till now I never knew thee." (I.iv.5-6)

After inquiring her name he yet addresses her as "sweetheart," saying

> "It were unmannerly to take you out
> And not to kiss you." (ibid.94-96)

Nevertheless he reserves for his first queen (and presumably sweetheart) Katherine of Arragon, his highest tributes of devotion. He is the type of husband whose words outspeak his acts. No later than in Scene two of Act I do we read: "Enter the Queen," ushered by two dukes; she kneels: The King riseth from his state, takes her up, places her beside him, answering her protest with:

> "Arise and take place by us. Half your suit
> Never name to me; you have half our power.
> The other moiety, ere you ask, is given.
> Repeat your wills and take it." (I.2.10-13)

But fine words butter no parsnips. When she has imparted what is on her mind, namely the excessive new taxes, "commissions," to carry on the war with France, he does not mince his words in contradiction.

> "By my lite, this is against our pleasure." (ibid. 67)

he says, and of course does not deviate by a hair's breadth from his design, for all her eloquent pleas. His supreme tribute is in the court-scene, in Blackfriars, but it is made, after all, to her retreating presence; she has shaken the dust of the mock trial off her shoes, and withdrawn, proposing to be judged only by the Pope.

> "Go thy ways, Kate:
> That man i' th' world who shall report he has
> A better wife, let him in naught be trusted
> For speaking false in this. Thou art alone
> If they rare qualities, sweet gentleness,
> Thy meekness saintlike, wife-like government,
> Obeying in commanding, and thy parts
> Sovereign and pious else could speak thee out)
> The queen of earthly queens."

So our pursuit of husbands to observe and study has taken us into royal chambers and village attics, to eastern Ephesus and northern Scotland, to Rome and Denmark, to pagan times, in classic lands, in barbaric Britain, and in highly devout Renaissance Verona. Is not the original contention borne out that the married state was found by our dramatist to be one of the most fertile and varied in emotional possibilities?

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